

REMARKS

The following claims are pending in the application: 1 – 21, 46 – 72, and 88 – 91

The following claims have been amended: 17 and 18

The following claims have been deleted: 55 – 72 and 90 – 91

The following claims have been added:

As a result of the foregoing Amendment, the following claims remain pending in the application: 1 – 21, 46 – 54, 88 and 89.

Amendment to claims 17 and 18

Applicant has amended claims 17 and 18 to correct an obvious grammatical error.

Cancellation of claims

Applicant has canceled claims 55 – 72 and 90 – 91 without prejudice and reserves the right to pursue the claims through one or more divisional applications.

Update of claim identifiers

Applicant has updated the parenthetical expressions for previously withdrawn claims 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 48 – 50, 53, 88, and 89 to “previously presented” in light of the Examiner’s allowance of claims 1 – 20, 46 – 54, 88, and 89.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner takes the position that the term "secondary component" as used in claim 21 is not understood and no proper antecedent basis is found in the descriptive portion of the specification.

Applicant respectfully submits that the specification does in fact provide proper antecedent support for the use of the term "secondary component". The Examiner's attention is directed to paragraph [0029] which is reproduced below for convenience:

[0029] While not specifically shown in the drawing figures, it is also possible to use the system and method of the present invention to join or attach **secondary components** to a sheet of material, as well as, or rather than to accomplish the joining of two sheets. For example, a component adapted to be joined to a sheet of material may be placed into a die cavity, which cavity may be similar to those depicted in the drawing figures. The component preferably has an aperture or other structure for receiving a portion of the sheet of material that has been located over the die cavity. The projectile may then be fired into the sheet of material to force a portion thereof through the aperture in the component. The die is preferably designed to cause the material being forced through the aperture to bulge outward as it passes therethrough. The material is then forced to expand to a point beyond the circumference of the aperture,

thereby causing the component to become attached to the sheet of material. Such a method may be used, for example, to install a tab to the top of a beverage can. (*emphasis added*)

As can be clearly seen, paragraph [0029] of the specification does in fact provide proper antecedent support for the term "secondary component" contrary to the Examiner's allegation. (An example of a secondary component is the tab installed to the top of beverage cans.) Accordingly, as the term "secondary component" is properly supported by the specification Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's outstanding rejection may be properly withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendment and accompanying remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is properly in condition for allowance and may be passed to issuance upon payment of the appropriate fees.

Telephone inquiry to the undersigned in order to clarify or otherwise expedite prosecution of the subject application is respectfully encouraged.

Respectfully submitted,

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